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Item 8 (a) of the provisional agenda
Reports on the work of the Conference of European Statisticians, its Bureau and Teams of Specialists

Report of the second meeting of the 2013/2014 Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians

Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

Summary

The present report is submitted in compliance with the Rules Governing the Work of the Conference and its Bureau (ECE/CES/2007/8), adopted by the Conference of European Statisticians at its fifty-third plenary session. Referring to the Rules, the Bureau acts as a steering body of the Conference. The report includes decisions taken by the Bureau at its 21-22 October 2013 meeting on the work carried out under the auspices of the Conference.

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Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	3
II.	In-depth reviews of selected statistical areas	3
	A. Big data	3
	B. Entrepreneurship	4
	C. Review of the outcomes of in-depth reviews	5
III.	Meeting with the top management of UNECE	6
IV.	UNECE Statistical Programme for 2014	6
	A. Ageing-related statistics	7
	B. Population and housing censuses	7
	C. Crime classification	8
	D. Health statistics	9
	E. Global production	9
	F. Business registers	10
	G. Modernisation of statistical production and services	11
	H. Human resources management and training	11
	G. Measuring quality of employment	12
	J. Environmental indicators	12
	K. Other issues	13
V.	Strategic Framework 2016-2017	13
VI.	Guidelines for Harmoniozing Time-use surveys	13
VII.	Follow-up to the CES 2013 plenary session	14
	A. Seminar on challenges in implementing SEEA and measuring sustainable development in follow-up to Rio+20	14
	B. Seminar on challenges in providing access to micro-data for research	15
VII.	Preparations for the CES 2014 plenary session	16
	A. Evaluation of the 61st CES plenary session	16
	B. Organization of the CES seminars	16
	C. Organization of the CES 2014 seminar "What is the value of official statistics and how do we communicate that value?"	16
	D. Organization of the CES 2014 seminar "Migration statistics"	17
	E. Report on indicators of gender equality planned to be submitted to the CES 2014 plenary session	18
	F. Preparation of the formal session, draft agenda and timetable for the 2014 plenary session	18
IX.	Presentation of the World Health Organization's activities related to statistics	18
X.	Dates and venue of the next CES Bureau meetings	19

I. Introduction

1. The second meeting of the 2013/2014 Bureau was held in Geneva on 21-22 October 2013. The following members of the Bureau attended: Mr. W. Smith (Chairman, Canada), Mr. B. Aydemir (Turkey), Ms. M. Bruun (Finland), Ms. J. Matheson (the United Kingdom), Mr. O. Osaulenko (Ukraine), Mr. B. Pink (Australia) and Mr. E. Sojo Garza-Aldape (Mexico). The following permanent observers also attended: Mr. L. M. Ducharme (IMF), Ms. M. Durand, (OECD), Mr. P. Everaers (representing Mr. W. Radermacher, Eurostat), Mr. A. Kosarev (representing Mr. Sokolin, (CIS-STAT)), Ms. K. Osaki-Tomita (UNSD) and Ms. L. Bratanova (UNECE). Mr. S. Alkalaj attended at the invitation of the Chair of the Bureau for agenda item 3. Mr. S. Chatterji (World Health Organization) attended for agenda item 9.

2. The following persons assisted the members of the Bureau: Ms. A. L. MacMillan (Canada), Ms. I. Muzychenko (Ukraine), Ms. S. Onnur (Turkey), Mr. Mario Palma (Mexico), Ms. C. Sa and Ms. M. J. Santos (Eurostat). Ms. T. Luige of UNECE served as Secretary of the meeting.

3. The following staff of the UNECE Statistical Division also attended: Mr. C. Boldsen, Ms. A. Peltola, Mr. R. Peltola, Mr. S. Vale, Mr. P. Valente and Mr. A. Vikat.

II. In-depth reviews of selected statistical areas

A. Big data

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/2 by UNECE with input from a Task Team on Big Data

4. The Bureau conducted an in-depth review on Big Data based on a paper prepared by the Task Team on Big Data, coordinated by the secretariat. The paper outlined current initiatives and proposed an international collaboration project on the use of Big Data for official statistics, to be overseen by the High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Statistical Production and Services.

5. The following points were raised in the discussion:

(a) The paper provides a very good overview of the issues concerning use of Big Data in official statistics. Many of the issues are common across organisations. Individual statistical organisations do not have sufficient resources to tackle all issues related to Big Data, therefore international collaboration is needed;

(b) Big Data is not an end in itself, it must add value for users of statistics. It is important to see if Big Data can help with problems that official statistics is trying to solve, for example concerning issues related to globalisation and timeliness. Official statistics should create an environment for using Big Data rather than develop applications for specific subject–matter areas;

(c) Challenges for official statistics in using Big Data are mainly methodological. Solutions to technological problems may be found outside official statistics. Active collaboration with the private sector, academia, and others with experience of using Big Data will be essential. We should identify what official statistics can contribute to using Big Data, as well as the areas where other sectors have more to offer;

(d) The scope of the proposed project on Big Data in official statistics is very broad and ambitious, some prioritisation of activities is needed;

(e) A mixture of conceptual and practical issues should be addressed in the project. Several Bureau members considered the Work Package no. 1 as a priority. Ultimately the scope and priorities of the project will be demand driven, as the resources that statistical offices will commit for each work package will determine the outcomes that can be achieved;

(f) The project proposal does not address some key strategic issues around procurement, relationships with Big Data suppliers (particularly for global sources), sustainability of supply and public perceptions about the use of different types of Big Data. It should also pay more attention to communication issues, including to communication platforms;

(g) The work packages on training and project management could be further developed. The project should identify where other stakeholders have skills that are lacking in the official statistics community. This will highlight opportunities to develop strategic partnerships based on mutual benefit, rather than try to compete with other sectors;

(h) The proposed project should provide some case studies on the use of Big Data;

(i) The project should consider the needs of less-developed countries, and should be open to them to participate and benefit;

(j) Coordination with UNSD activities is needed. The proposed agenda for the next Statistical Commission session includes an item on Big Data. A new sub-group of the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Millennium Development Goals has been established to consider Big Data issues. UNSD intends to play a coordinating role across regions.

Conclusions

6. The Bureau expressed its support for the project proposal. It stressed the sense of urgency and asked the High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Statistical Production and Services to take this work forward.

B. Entrepreneurship

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/3 by OECD and Eurostat, ECE/CES/BUR/2012/OCT/3/Add.1 by UNECE

7. The Bureau conducted an in-depth review of entrepreneurship statistics based on a paper prepared by OECD and Eurostat. The paper outlined current initiatives and proposed future work, including the establishment of a task force under the CES. The following points were raised in the discussion:

(a) Collection of entrepreneurship data can provide an impetus for improving the quality of business registers, especially in less developed statistical systems. This in turn has a positive effect on the quality of other economic statistics and national accounts. Following guidelines and good practices in business registers are essential for producing good entrepreneurship statistics;

(b) The data on entrepreneurship are often not comparable between countries. The OECD and Eurostat data sets can be used as sources for comparable data;

(c) There is a limit to harmonising entrepreneurship statistics between countries. Many determinants of entrepreneurship differ across countries, for example the legal basis, social and cultural aspects, market conditions, access to finance and knowledge, etc;

(d) The use of data from economic censuses for entrepreneurship statistics could be mentioned in the paper;

(e) It is extremely difficult to collect data on turnover of businesses and closed businesses while these data are of great interest;

(f) A Task Force on entrepreneurship statistics under the CES could be important to widen the scope of this work beyond EU and OECD countries;

(g) The need to ensure effective coordination between the existing Task Force on Statistical business registers, and the proposed Task Force on entrepreneurship was stressed.

Conclusions

8. The Bureau asked the Task Force on statistical business registers to address the issues related to business registers in the in-depth review paper.

9. The Bureau asked the secretariat in cooperation with OECD and Eurostat to draft a proposal for further work with concrete objectives and outcomes for the next Bureau meeting in January 2014. The on-going work in entrepreneurship statistics and related areas should be taken into account in the proposal.

C. Review of the outcomes of in-depth reviews

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/4 by UNECE

10. The Bureau discussed the outcomes of in-depth reviews carried out during the last seven years, and considered how to effectively use in-depth reviews as a tool for coordination. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) In-depth reviews are a key to guiding the work of the CES and ensuring that it addresses the gaps and emerging areas. The reviews lead to concrete outcomes in terms of guidelines and recommendations;

(b) The good outcome of the process depends on high quality contributions by volunteers who prepare the papers that provide basis for the discussion. The in-depth review papers are of great value and should be promoted beyond CES, for example by sharing the papers with the other regional commissions;

(c) Not all in-depth reviews need to lead to new work under the CES. Many issues discussed have been taken up at other fora;

(d) In-depth review papers should prioritise the issues and proposed actions taking into account the limited resources of statistical offices;

(e) In-depth reviews should take into account the user needs for statistics. Considering the viewpoint of users could provide new ideas for selecting the in-depth review topics.

Conclusions

11. The Bureau considered the in-depth review process of great value for CES as it allows focusing the work on most topical areas which leads to tangible results. The Bureau

noted that selection of the right topics and high quality of the in-depth review papers is crucial for ensuring a good outcome of a review.

12. The Bureau will select the topics for the next in-depth reviews in January 2014.

13. The Secretariat should consider ways for sharing the review papers with other regional commissions, and promoting their use in the statistical community.

14. The Bureau asked the Secretariat to update the template for in-depth review papers to reflect the discussions. In addition to the issues currently included in the template, the reviews should identify priorities for national statistical offices taking into account their limited resources, and analyse key user needs.

15. The Bureau considered useful to prepare a 'guide' for the new members briefly describing the annual working cycle and processes of the CES and its Bureau. The Guide would include the Rules governing the CES, the paper on the outcomes of the in-depth reviews, recommendations for organising the CES seminars, templates for papers, etc.

III. Meeting with the top management of UNECE

16. The Bureau met with the UNECE Executive Secretary, Mr. Sven Alkalaj. The Executive Secretary underlined that statistics is a priority working area of the UNECE and referred to the good evaluation of the statistical work during the UNECE review.

17. The Executive Secretary emphasized the efficient way in which the Conference and its subsidiary bodies work, in particular through Task Forces with concrete terms of reference, deliverables and sunset clauses. He emphasised that the flexible way of working allows for taking on new subject areas as they emerge, and noted that the concrete results of the CES work, such as recommendations and guidelines, have a clear value added for the region and beyond.

IV. UNECE Statistical programme for 2014

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/5 by UNECE

18. The Bureau discussed the draft UNECE Statistical Programme for 2014 and the various Steering Groups and Task Forces that are related to the activities. The terms of reference of currently active Steering Groups and Task Forces are available at www.unece.org/stats/ToS.html.

19. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The work programmes of UNECE, Eurostat and OECD include a high level of complementarity: many activities are either pursued jointly or are closely coordinated;

(b) Paragraph 17 in the document (on leading, composite and sentiment indicators) should be reformulated as it refers to the threat that these indicators may compromise statistical offices' objectivity or reliability. All statistics include subjective information as the data are collected from individuals, even in business statistics. This does not necessarily compromise the objectivity or reliability of official statistics;

(c) The work on human capital should be coordinated with OECD (paragraph 36);

(d) The work on environment statistics should take into account the newly set up group to ensure coordination of work on SEEA implementation (paragraph 40).

Conclusions

20. The Bureau approved the 2014 Statistical Programme subject to the suggestions made in the discussion.

A. Ageing-related statistics

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/6 by the Task Force

21. The Bureau reviewed the work plan of the Task Force on Ageing-related Statistics, and discussed further work. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The progress of work of the Task Force should be reviewed annually;

(b) The participation of statisticians, policymakers and academics in the Task Force is valuable but may be challenging. The secretariat and the Chair should carefully consider how to organize the work to ensure the Task Force's progress;

(c) The secretariat of the UNECE Population Unit will also support the Task Force. The organization of work was on the agenda of the meeting of the Task Force on 27 November;

(d) If the model adopted in this Task Force where statisticians, policymakers and academia work together is successful, it may be used in future also in other work areas of the Conference.

Conclusions

22. The Bureau asked the Task Force to prepare a progress report for the October 2014 meeting of the Bureau.

B. Population and housing censuses

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/7 by the Steering Group

23. The Bureau reviewed the progress of work of the Steering Group and Task Forces on population and housing censuses that are preparing the CES census recommendations for the 2020 round, and discussed further work. The Secretariat reported the main outcomes of the expert meeting on censuses that took place in Geneva from 30 September to 3 October 2013.

24. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) Preparing the recommendations for the 2020 round of censuses to be available in 2015 is a challenge given the rapid changes in technology and data sources. However, early availability of the recommendations is necessary for countries for the census preparation process, and allows to seek most cost-effective solutions;

(b) An additional challenge for the 2020 census recommendations is the need to be relevant for all countries regardless of the census method used. There is a big diversification of census methods in the UNECE region, and the recommendations need to be flexible;

(c) An increasing number of countries are using or planning to use census methods based on combination of sources (e.g. registers and traditional field collection, or internet data collection). More guidance on these approaches, including the use of administrative data, internet data collection and paperless census methods is needed;

(d) The CIS countries will most probably use the traditional census method in the 2020 round but there is increasing interest in using registers, and a gradual move to combined data sources can be expected;

(e) UNSD leads the global census programme. UNSD and UNECE closely coordinate their work in this area. The lessons learned by the European countries are very useful for countries in other regions, such as on register based censuses, costs-benefit analysis, etc;

(f) The censuses should be defined more in terms of outcomes than methods, they should be considered not as a special event but as a regular source for social and demographic information;

(g) There should be a strong link between the new census recommendations and capacity building.

Conclusions

25. The Bureau supported the work of the Steering Group and Task Forces in keeping up with the challenging work plan.

C. Crime classification

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/8 by the Task Force

26. The Bureau discussed the accomplishments and the final report of the UNECE-UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Task Force on crime classification. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The Task Force did an excellent work in an uncharted territory. The work is continued by the initiative led by UNODC and Mexico (INEGI) under the mandate of the UN Statistical Commission. A second version of the international crime classification is being finalised and 46 countries have indicated their interest in testing the classification. A new manual and the classification should be submitted to the UNSC in 2015;

(b) There are big challenges in implementing the classification and it will be a long process to introduce changes in practice. Crime statistics is often not of high priority and many countries do not consider important international comparability in this area;

(c) UNECE should be involved in the new expert group set up by the UN Statistical Commission to ensure continuity and enable reporting of the results of the work at global level back to the CES Bureau.

Conclusions

27. The Bureau congratulated the Task Force for the excellent pioneering work on crime classifications. The Bureau closed the Task Force on crime classification since its activities will be continued in the framework of developing an international classification of crimes for statistical purposes under the UNSC.

28. The Bureau asked the secretariat to report back in 2015 on how the work at the global level has progressed.

D. Health statistics

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/9 by the Steering Group

29. The Bureau discussed the accomplishments and the final report of the Joint UNECE/WHO/Eurostat Steering Group on Measuring Health Status (also known as the Budapest Initiative (BI)). The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The work of the Budapest Initiative was carried out in close cooperation with the Washington group on disability statistics. The question set on measuring health status developed by the Budapest Initiative can be considered as a subset of the survey questions on disability discussed by the Washington group;

(b) Although the work of the Budapest Initiative contributed to improving international comparability in the measurement of health status, there is still strong need for further improvements. Unfortunately only few of the BI questions were included in the European Health Interview Survey;

(c) Health statistics currently focus mainly on mortality, good information on health status is still lacking. Health statistics are increasingly important because of the high government spending on health, and ageing population in many countries. There are unresolved problems in health statistics, including coordination with WHO and other international organizations.

Conclusions

30. The Bureau thanked the Steering Group for the good work and closed the group.

E. Global production

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/10 by the Task Force

31. The Bureau reviewed the progress of work of the Task Force on Global Production, including the proposal to extend the mandate of the Task Force by one year. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) Implementation of 2008 SNA and the revised Balance of Payments Manual (BPM6) are major tasks in all statistical offices. The work of the Task Force on global production will be very important in terms of providing practical guidance to countries on treating global production arrangements in the national accounts and balance of payments statistics;

(b) The Task Force has identified conceptual and measurement issues related to the recording of the so-called factoryless goods producers (FGP) and the determination of the economic ownership inside global production chains, in particular for intellectual property products. The recommendations will have significant impact on national accounts and balance of payments statistics;

(c) The recommendations should be finalised as quickly as possible as countries are already in the process of preparing the implementation of 2008 SNA and BPM6. However, the Bureau stressed the need to develop clear recommendations on a solid foundation, and take the necessary time to consult the recommendations with all involved countries, organisations and relevant expert groups;

(d) The recommendations will be important for all countries, not only in the UNECE region. Other regional commissions should be kept well informed and if possible involved in the process. A number of individual countries outside the region, such as Japan,

India, Republic of Korea and China have already participated in the work and several others like Indonesia, Vietnam or Malaysia would be interested in doing so;

(e) Several EU countries will be able to share practical examples in implementing 2008 SNA and BPM6 in near future and their country case studies could be included in the Guide. The extension of the work by one year will allow more time to collect practical experience from countries;

(f) The work of the Task Force is an example of good cooperation among countries and international organizations, such as UNECE, Eurostat, OECD, IMF and UNSD. Global production is a very complex area and new issues will continue to emerge that should be dealt with at international level. It was considered necessary to have a forum where these issues could be discussed and experience shared. This could be done in terms of a functional mailbox, wiki or a similar platform, back-to-back meetings with the joint UNECE/OECD/Eurostat Expert Group on national accounts, or separate expert meetings.

Conclusions

32. The Bureau expressed strong support to the work of the Task Force and extended its mandate by one year. The Bureau agreed with the proposed way forward, including the submission of a draft version of the Guide to the Bureau in January 2014. The Bureau underlined that issues, which require further consultation with relevant expert groups (such as recommendations on FGP and economic ownership) should be clearly highlighted in the draft Guide before sending to countries for consultation in spring 2014, since incorrect or unclear recommendations would create considerable confusion. The secretariat in consultation with the Task Force members should prepare a more detailed proposal on how to organise in future the exchange of experience between countries on issues related to global production, including further discussions on methodological issues.

F. Business registers

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/11 by the Task Force

33. The Bureau reviewed the progress of work of the Task Force on International Guidelines on Statistical Business Registers, including the proposal to extend the work by one year. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The Guidelines are very important because of the key role of statistical business registers for the production of economic statistics and national accounts;

(b) It is necessary to allow sufficient time for drafting the chapters, incorporating comments from countries, thorough editing and consultation of the Guidelines with CES member countries and relevant organisations;

(c) The Guidelines should cover issues related to entrepreneurship indicators as raised in the in-depth review of entrepreneurship statistics (ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/3);

(d) The work is an example of good cooperation between UNECE and UNSD;

(e) Capacity building will be important to ensure the implementation of the Guidelines in countries with less developed statistical systems.

Conclusions

34. The Bureau extended the mandate of the Task Force by one year and approved the updated work plan. The Task Force should ensure that the Guidelines cover the issues that are relevant for entrepreneurship statistics.

G. Modernisation of statistical production and services

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/12 by the High-Level Group

35. The Bureau reviewed the proposed Terms of Reference for the Executive Board and the four modernisation committees, to be established under the High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Statistical Production and Services (HLG), replacing the current structure of the various existing expert groups that have been working under HLG.

36. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The Bureau expressed strong support for the work of HLG;

(b) The structure should not be too complicated and should support innovation and flexibility. The new governance structure is a consolidation of the existing working structures. Several expert groups have been closed and their activities absorbed into the new structure, for example the Steering Group on Statistical Metadata and the Sharing Advisory Board;

(c) There should be clear division of labour between the Committees and clear objectives and outputs. The expected outcomes of the work should be precisely formulated to avoid any overlaps with work carried out by other groups;

(d) Coordination and communication between the groups will be ensured through representatives of the modernisation committees being part of the Executive Board, all groups sharing a common secretariat, and twice-yearly reports to the HLG on activities and issues;

(e) Reporting twice a year may be too much unless the report is going to be brief;

(f) Coordination with related initiatives such as the Statistical Network is important;

(g) The secretary of HLG has an observer status in the Statistical Network, and a reciprocal arrangement is under consideration;

(h) The Modernisation Committee on Standards will coordinate different standardisation activities and ensure greater interoperability of standards.

Conclusions

37. The Bureau approved the proposed governance structure for the modernization work and the terms of reference of the new groups, subject to HLG reviewing and clarifying the objectives and outcomes of the groups at its meeting in November 2013.

H. Human resources management and training

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/13 by the Steering Group

38. The Bureau reviewed the progress of work of the Steering Group on Human Resources Management and Training, and discussed further work including the topics of a workshop to be organised in 2014. The following points were raised in the discussion:

(a) The Bureau praised the publication Human Resources Management and Training. Compilation of good practices in statistical offices, published in early 2013;

(b) The Steering Group should address also relevant 'external' factors, such as how the labour market is changing and how to compete with other employers; training of

users including members of the press and policymakers; and the evolving role of national statistical offices;

(c) The Bureau proposed addressing a number of points under the planned 2014 workshop, such as: training of users; dealing with budget cuts and their impact on staff wellbeing; post-training follow-up and knowledge-sharing; strategies to attract and retain young statisticians in their early careers in light of competition; releasing the creativity of employees, and flexible working arrangements.

Conclusions

39. The Bureau asked the Steering Group to reflect the suggestions from the discussion in finalising the outline for the 2014 HRMT workshop.

G. Measuring quality of employment

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/14 by the Expert Group

40. The Bureau reviewed the progress of work of the Expert Group on Measuring Quality of Employment, and discussed further work in finalising the draft *Statistical Framework for Measuring Quality of Employment*. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The Bureau commended the Expert Group's cooperation with other organizations that are working in related areas;

(b) The Bureau reiterated the importance of focusing on statistical measurement issues and tools, and avoiding any value judgements;

(c) The Expert Group should consider if the dimension on security of employment could be improved by including indicators on e.g. new forms of employment contracts. The difficulty of finding reliable data on this topic was noted;

(d) The Expert Group should reflect in the recommendations the different availability of data sources among countries, and suggest alternative sources.

Conclusions

41. The Bureau supported the work and encouraged the group to finalize the list of indicators for all dimensions of the statistical framework.

J. Environmental indicators

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/15 by UNECE

42. The Bureau reviewed the progress of work of the UNECE Intersectoral Task Force on Environmental Indicators, and discussed further work in finalising the updated *Guidelines for the application of Environmental Indicators in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia*. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The Guidelines include a long list of indicators many of which require several associated data tables. Compiling this data set will be a large task and will need significant investment from countries;

(b) There is support to the implementation of the Guidelines, but more detailed discussion on how this work could be balanced with other operational requirements may be needed;

(c) The Guidelines should include a reference to the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) Central Framework and the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES). Reference should also be made to other data reporting requirements, such as the OECD SEEA core tables, the OECD Green Growth reporting and the Eurostat reporting on environmental accounting;

(d) The work done by the Task Force is appreciated and the proposed core set of indicators is considered appropriate for the region. It was proposed to include the new set of indicators in Eurostat's upcoming environmental indicators metadata catalogue.

1. Conclusions

43. The Bureau appreciated the practical and useful work carried out by the Task Force with EECCA and SEE countries, and supported the work on finalising the updated *Guidelines for the application of Environmental Indicators in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.*

K. Other issues

44. The secretariat informed the Bureau about the outcome of the Second Meeting on Climate Change Related Statistics, held on 8-9 October 2013 in Geneva. The participants of the expert meeting supported the Task Force's recommendations, and offered concrete examples of good practices to be included in the final report. As an outcome of the work, good working relations were established with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO).

V. Strategic Framework 2016-2017

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/16 by UNECE

45. The Bureau discussed the Strategic Framework for 2016-2017 for the UNECE Statistics Subprogramme. It was noted that:

(a) The text on risks should reflect the challenge of limited resources of statistical offices as an obstacle to responding to the increasing and changing information needs;

(b) The text on strategy should reflect the expectations to work on global geospatial information management (GGIM).

Conclusions

46. The Bureau approved the Strategic Framework for 2016-2017 subject to the changes listed above.

VI. Guidelines for harmonizing time-use surveys

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/17 by the Task Force

47. The Bureau discussed the *Guidelines for Harmonizing Time-Use Surveys* prepared by the Task Force on Time-Use Surveys. The draft Guidelines were consulted with all CES members in April-May 2013. In June 2013, the CES plenary session requested the Task Force to reflect the comments from the electronic consultation and from the CES plenary

session in the Guidelines, and present the Guidelines for endorsement to the Bureau. The Bureau also discussed possible further work in areas identified by the Task Force.

48. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The Guidelines provide a good example of efficient work using electronic communication and only one face-to-face meeting;

(b) The Guidelines complement the existing guidance material and constitute an important step in the harmonization of time-use surveys;

(c) The Guidelines should consider the latest resolution of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians on statistics of work, employment and labour underutilisation;

(d) A United Nations expert group is currently working on the International Classification of Activities for Time-Use Statistics (ICATUS) planned to be submitted for adoption to the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2015;

(e) Mexico intends to promote the use of the Guidelines among statisticians in the Americas;

(f) The secretariat could undertake consultations with ILO about the possibility of developing guidelines on measuring unpaid household work;

(g) Creating a platform for sharing reports on the implementation of light time-use diaries and novel data collection methods would be very useful for countries that are planning their time-use surveys.

Conclusions

49. The Bureau endorsed the Guidelines for Harmonizing Time-Use Surveys and requested the secretariat to proceed with their publication and dissemination. The Bureau closed the Task Force on Time-Use Surveys as it has successfully completed its work.

50. The Bureau requested the secretariat to present a proposal for future work on time-use surveys to its next meeting.

VII. Follow-up to the CES 2013 plenary session

A. Seminar on challenges in implementing SEEA and measuring sustainable development in follow-up to Rio+20

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/18 by UNECE

51. The Bureau discussed proposals for follow-up work as a result of the 2013 CES seminar on measuring sustainable development, and to support the implementation of the CES Recommendations on measuring sustainable development. The CES plenary session endorsed the Recommendations in June 2013.

52. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The UN Open Working Group (OWG) has asked the UN Statistical Division in New York to prepare short papers on statistical issues, possible data sources and measurability for the thematic sessions of OWG. The co-chairs of the UNSC Friends of the Chair (FOC) group on further measures of progress organised a one day event on 17 December 2013 to discuss the measurement issues between policy makers and statisticians;

(b) It will be important to translate the Recommendations into Russian;

(c) Australia, Mexico, Turkey and Ukraine confirmed their willingness to pilot test the SD indicators proposed in the Recommendations;

(d) It is important to have a platform for countries to share experiences in implementing SEEA and measuring sustainable development. The work under CES on supporting implementation and sharing of experience on SEEA should be coordinated with the London group.

Conclusions

53. The Bureau asked the Secretariat to prepare, in consultation with selected countries, a more detailed proposal for further work on methodological issues in measuring sustainable development and for sharing experience in implementation of SEEA (in line with the proposals in document ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/18), and organise the pilot testing of the *CES recommendations on measuring sustainable development*.

B. Seminar on challenges in providing access to micro-data for research

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/19 by UNECE

54. The Bureau discussed proposals for follow-up work resulting from the 2013 CES seminar on challenges in providing access to micro-data for research. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) Follow-up actions should be incorporated within existing activities where possible;

(b) The OECD Expert Group on Micro-data Access is preparing a handbook that will address some of the proposed follow-up activities. Its mandate has been extended for one year. It is proposed to wait until the results of this work are available before deciding whether to launch new activities under CES;

(c) The glossary being developed by the OECD Expert Group will be finalised by early 2014;

(d) It is important to have a platform to share experiences. UNECE has transferred the publication *Managing Statistical Confidentiality and Micro-data Access* to a wiki format, and is seeking new and updated case studies of national experiences;

(e) Eurostat will provide a case study in early 2014, based on the application of Commission Regulation (EU) 557/2013 on access to confidential data for scientific purposes;

(f) It was proposed to combine the follow-up activities A (sharing experience) and C (updating good practices in the 2007 publication on managing confidentiality), as well as B (preparing a check list for the development of a micro-data access system) and F (harmonising terminology).

Conclusions

55. The Secretariat will follow up with the work taking into account the suggestions by the Bureau.

VII. Preparations for the CES 2014 plenary session

A. Evaluation of the 61st CES plenary session

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/20 by UNECE

56. The results of the evaluation questionnaires of the 2013 CES plenary session were presented for information.

B. Organization of the CES seminars

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/21 by UNECE

57. The Bureau discussed the organization of the CES seminars, and reviewed the *Guidelines for organizing CES seminars*. The following points were made in the discussion:

(a) The seminars could be more outward looking and invite stakeholders from outside official statistics;

(b) The session organiser should prepare a short summary of the main issues in the papers capturing the critical, substantive issues for the discussion;

(c) The papers should not be too long, about 6 pages would be ideal. The papers should focus on issues and propose solutions. The seminar and session organisers should contact authors to orient the papers towards the main issues that are planned to be considered during the sessions;

(d) No difference will be made between invited and supporting papers. The seminar and session organisers should agree with some authors that their papers will be submitted earlier (about 3 months before the meeting) so that these can be translated into French and Russian;

(e) Technical possibilities to enable experts in countries to follow the seminar and to make the discussion more interactive should be considered (such as web-streaming, recording the discussion in video, tweeting, etc.). The related costs and the simultaneous interpretation into French and Russian have to be taken into account. The more interactive tools can be tested at expert meetings before using at the CES plenary session;

(f) The format of the seminars could be flexible and CES could experiment with new formats.

Conclusions

58. The Bureau asked the Secretariat to update the *Recommendations for organising the CES seminars* to offer more flexibility, and reflect the issues raised during the discussion.

C. Organization of the CES 2014 seminar "What is the value of official statistics and how do we communicate that value?"

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/22 by United Kingdom

59. The Bureau discussed the organization of the CES 2014 seminar on the value of official statistics based on an outline prepared by the seminar organizer, the United Kingdom. Sweden and Eurostat will be the session organizers. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The discussion at the seminar should focus on practical issues;

(b) It would be interesting to involve users and other stakeholders in the seminar, possibly as keynote speakers;

(c) The value of official statistics should be discussed both from the national and international perspectives. The value depends on the context – international comparability is a value that is often not considered by policy makers at a national level;

(d) The views of young statisticians on how to communicate the value of official statistics would be interesting;

(e) Other interesting materials that could be used at the seminar are: the World Bank video related to Open Data and the results of the French survey on trust in official statistics.

Conclusions

60. The seminar organizers will update the outline for the January 2014 Bureau meeting, taking into account the suggestions by the Bureau. The seminar will take place on Wednesday, 9 April 2014. The deadline for papers to be sent for translation will be 15 January 2014.

61. CES Bureau members were invited to make proposals for a keynote speaker.

D. Organization of the CES 2014 seminar "Migration statistics"

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/23 by Mexico and UNECE

62. The Bureau discussed the organization of the CES seminar on migration statistics based on an outline prepared by the seminar organizers, Mexico and UNECE. The first session is jointly organized by Norway and UNSD, and the second session by the Russian Federation and CIS-STAT. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) Mexico proposed to start both sessions with a presentation by international organizations providing an overview of general trends or issues, followed by a paper summarizing the country contributions. OECD would prepare the lead paper for session 1 (on recent migration trends) and Eurostat for session 2 (on methods to improve measurement of migration);

(b) The seminar should take into account the results of the Conference "People on the Move" organised by the International Association for Official Statistics (IAOS) in Ottawa in 2006;

(c) CIS-STAT offered to translate four papers into Russian, in addition to the six papers to be translated by the UN;

(d) The paper by Ukraine belongs to Session 1;

(e) There will be a joint paper by Finland and Estonia on methodology of using mobile phone data to measure migration between the two countries.

Conclusions

63. The seminar organizer will update the outline for the January 2014 Bureau meeting, taking into account the suggestions by the Bureau. The seminar will take place on Thursday, 10 April 2014. The deadline for papers to be sent for translation through the UN translation services will be 15 January 2014.

E. Report on indicators of gender equality planned to be submitted to the CES 2014 plenary session

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/24 by the Task Force

64. The Bureau discussed the draft report of the Task Force on Indicators of Gender Equality. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The report is of excellent quality, well-coordinated with existing initiatives and a useful contribution to the measurement of gender equality;

(b) The proposed indicators need to be kept consistent with the global minimum set of gender indicators developed by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics, in view of the envisaged minor updates to the global set;

(c) Mexico highlighted the possibility of disseminating this report at the Fifth Global Forum on Gender Statistics that they will host in November 2014.

Conclusions

65. The secretariat will send the report for electronic consultation to all CES members in the beginning of 2014. If the outcome of the electronic consultation is positive, the report will be submitted to the CES 2014 plenary session for endorsement.

F. Preparation of the formal session, draft agenda and timetable for the 2014 plenary session

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/OCT/25 by UNECE

66. The Bureau reviewed the draft timetable of the CES 2014 plenary session.

Conclusions

67. The 62nd CES plenary session will take place on 9 - 11 (a.m.) April 2014 in Paris. The Bureau approved the draft timetable with the understanding that the detailed timing may still be adjusted. The secretariat will prepare an updated timetable of the CES 2014 plenary session for the 2014 January meeting of the Bureau.

68. The Bureau emphasised the importance of translating the main papers for the CES plenary session into French and Russian. These include the provisional agenda, report, one main paper for each sub-item on the agenda, and six main papers for each of the 1-day seminars held during the CES plenary session (a total of 25 papers).

IX. Presentation of the World Health Organization's activities related to statistics

69. The World Health Organization (WHO) presented its statistical activities. WHO mainly works in three areas related to statistics: monitoring levels and trends in health; developing standards and tools for health statistics; and strengthening countries' capacity to monitoring health issues.

70. WHO is mandated to work with Health Ministries to monitor levels and trends in health. Some of this is statistical work, and some is at the stage of research. For example, WHO produces Global Health Estimates in partnership with other UN agencies and the academia. The information is disseminated through the Global Health Observatory which is publicly available.

71. Concerning standards and tools, WHO is currently updating the International Classification of Diseases (ICD). Work has been started recently with the international household survey network to achieve a consensus for using household surveys in health measurement, e.g. for measuring health expenditure through household surveys.

72. WHO also engages with countries to check their data and build capacities to produce the required health-related information. WHO is working with about 90 countries to improve accountability for women's and children's health. A study on global ageing and adult health (SAGE) is being carried out in several countries. WHO is also working to ensure that health issues will be reflected in the post-2015 development agenda. Recently, a global health statistics reference group has been set up to guide the WHO work with priorities and the way forward.

73. WHO expressed interest to coordinate their work more closely with CES, in particular the work on time-use, subjective wellbeing and ageing. UNECE has been invited, for example to work together with WHO on a model disability survey.

74. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) It is necessary to find better models of cooperation between WHO and the statistical community as equal partners. Good cooperation would be beneficial for both sides allowing WHO to obtain better data, use better the information systems of national statistical offices and avoid duplication of data collection processes;

(b) Coordination can be improved both at national and international levels. WHO works with countries' Ministries of Health and recommends them to engage with national statistical offices. This does not work in all countries. UNECE and WHO may explore how to ensure that this recommendation is followed up. At international level, cooperation between WHO and other international organizations can be improved. WHO was encouraged to attend the international meetings where coordination issues are discussed (such as the Coordinating Committee of Statistical Activities);

(c) Health is one of the many areas to be included in household surveys which provide fundamental information to the statistical system. These data include, in addition to health data, information on socio-economic conditions, quality of life etc. in an internationally comparable format. Close cooperation between the Health Ministries and national statistical offices is necessarily to use the scarce resources efficiently;

(d) The knowledge of statistical offices could be beneficial in capacity building through the existing mechanisms and collaboration networks.

Conclusions

75. The Bureau thanked the WHO representative for the interesting and informative presentation. The Bureau members are willing to work more closely with WHO and health institutions to improve health statistics at both national and international levels.

X. Dates and venue of the next CES Bureau meetings

76. The CES Bureau confirmed the dates for its next meetings as follows:

(a) The next CES Bureau meetings will take place on 28-29 January 2014 in Geneva and on 21-22 October 2014, venue to be decided;

(b) A short Bureau meeting will take place during the CES 2014 plenary session to decide on the topics for the 2015 CES seminars and any other urgent matters (a meeting of 15-20 minutes during the lunch break on 9 April 2014);

(c) In 2015, the first CES Bureau meeting would take place tentatively during the week of 9 February 2015, venue and exact dates to be decided.

77. The 62nd CES plenary session will take place in Paris, back-to-back with the OECD Statistics Committee meeting, starting at 9:30 on 9 April and finishing by 12:30 on 11 April 2014.

78. The 63rd CES plenary session will take place in Geneva, during the week of 8 June 2015.